

## WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 1        1.    A method for filtering electronic mail, comprising:  
2            receiving, in a data processing system, an electronic  
3            mail message;  
4            determining if the electronic mail message includes an  
5            intro-word;  
6            delivering the electronic mail message if the  
7            electronic mail message includes the intro-word;  
8            and  
9            storing the electronic mail message if the electronic  
10          mail message does not include the intro-word.
- 1        2.    The method of claim 1, wherein the intro-word is  
2            located in a subject line of the electronic mail  
3            message.
- 1        3.    The method of claim 1, further comprising delivering  
2            the electronic mail message if the email address of a  
3            sender of the electronic mail message is on an  
4            authorized sender list.
- 1        4.    The method of claim 1, further comprising delivering  
2            the electronic mail message if the domain name of a  
3            sender of the electronic mail message is on an  
4            authorized domain list.
- 1        5.    The method of claim 1, further comprising, if the  
2            electronic mail message does not include the intro-  
3            word, then sending a confirmation message to the  
4            sender of the electronic mail message.

1       6.    The method of claim 5, further comprising:  
2            receiving a response mail message corresponding to the  
3            confirmation message;  
4            delivering the electronic mail message if the response  
5            mail message includes the intro-word; and  
6            storing the electronic mail message if the response  
7            mail message does not include the intro-word.

1       7.    The method of claim 5, further comprising:  
2            receiving a response corresponding to the confirmation  
3            message via an internet connection;  
4            delivering the electronic mail message if the response  
5            includes the intro-word; and  
6            storing the electronic mail message if the response  
7            does not include the intro-word.

1       8.    The method of claim 5, further comprising sending an  
2            obscured image of the intro-word to the sender.

1       9.    The method of claim 5, further comprising sending the  
2            intro-word to the sender in a non-machine-readable  
3            form.

1       10.   The method of claim 1, further comprising deleting the  
2            stored electronic mail message after a predetermined  
3            amount of time.

1 11. A data processing system having at least a processor  
2 and accessible memory, comprising:  
3 means for receiving, in the data processing system, an  
4 electronic mail message;  
5 means for determining if the electronic mail message  
6 includes an intro-word;  
7 means for delivering the electronic mail message if  
8 the electronic mail message includes the intro-  
9 word; and  
10 means for storing the electronic mail message if the  
11 electronic mail message does not include the  
12 intro-word.

1 12. The data processing system of claim 11, wherein the  
2 intro-word is located in a subject line of the  
3 electronic mail message.

1 13. The data processing system of claim 11, further means  
2 for comprising delivering the electronic mail message  
3 if the email address of a sender of the electronic  
4 mail message is on an authorized sender list.

1 14. The data processing system of claim 11, further  
2 comprising means for delivering the electronic mail  
3 message if the domain name of a sender of the  
4 electronic mail message is on an authorized domain  
5 list.

1 15. The data processing system of claim 11, further  
2 comprising means for sending a confirmation message to  
3 the sender of the electronic mail message if the  
4 electronic mail message does not include the intro-  
5 word.

1 16. The data processing system of claim 15, further  
2 comprising:  
3 means for receiving a response mail message  
4 corresponding to the confirmation message;  
5 means for delivering the electronic mail message if  
6 the response mail message includes the intro-  
7 word; and  
8 means for storing the electronic mail message if the  
9 response mail message does not include the intro-  
10 word.

1 17. The data processing system of claim 15, further  
2 comprising:  
3 means for receiving a response corresponding to the  
4 confirmation message via an internet connection;  
5 means for delivering the electronic mail message if  
6 the response includes the intro-word; and  
7 means for storing the electronic mail message if the  
8 response does not include the intro-word.

1 18. The data processing system of claim 15, further  
2 comprising means for sending an obscured image of the  
3 intro-word to the sender.

- 1        19. The data processing system of claim 15, further  
2            comprising means for sending the intro-word to the  
3            sender in a non-machine-readable form.
- 1        20. The data processing system of claim 11, further  
2            comprising means for deleting the stored electronic  
3            mail message after a predetermined amount of time.

1       21. A computer program product tangibly embodied in a  
2       machine-readable medium, comprising:  
3       instructions for receiving, in a data processing  
4       system, an electronic mail message;  
5       instructions for determining if the electronic mail  
6       message includes an intro-word;  
7       instructions for delivering the electronic mail  
8       message if the electronic mail message includes  
9       the intro-word; and  
10      instructions for storing the electronic mail message  
11      if the electronic mail message does not include  
12      the intro-word.

1       22. The computer program product of claim 21, wherein the  
2       intro-word is located in a subject line of the  
3       electronic mail message.

1       23. The computer program product of claim 21, further  
2       comprising instructions for delivering the electronic  
3       mail message if the email address of a sender of the  
4       electronic mail message is on an authorized sender  
5       list.

1       24. The computer program product of claim 21, further  
2       comprising instructions for delivering the electronic  
3       mail message if the domain name of a sender of the  
4       electronic mail message is on an authorized domain  
5       list.

1       25. The computer program product of claim 21, further  
2       comprising instructions for sending a confirmation  
3       message to the sender of the electronic mail message  
4       if the electronic mail message does not include the  
5       intro-word.

1       26. The computer program product of claim 25, further  
2       comprising:  
3       instructions for receiving a response mail message  
4       corresponding to the confirmation message;  
5       instructions for delivering the electronic mail  
6       message if the response mail message includes the  
7       intro-word; and  
8       instructions for storing the electronic mail message  
9       if the response mail message does not include the  
10      intro-word.

1       27. The computer program product of claim 25, further  
2       comprising:  
3       instructions for receiving a response corresponding to  
4       the confirmation message via an internet  
5       connection;  
6       instructions for delivering the electronic mail  
7       message if the response includes the intro-word;  
8       and  
9       instructions for storing the electronic mail message  
10      if the response does not include the intro-word.

1       28. The computer program product of claim 25, further  
2       comprising instructions for sending an obscured image  
3       of the intro-word to the sender.

1       29. The computer program product of claim 25, further  
2           comprising instructions for sending the intro-word to  
3           the sender in a non-machine-readable form.

1       30. The computer program product of claim 21, further  
2           comprising instructions for deleting the stored  
3           electronic mail message after a predetermined amount  
4           of time.